



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, PORTLAND DISTRICT**

STATE OF OREGON WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

SCOPING PUBLIC NOTICE

**Willamette River Basin Review Feasibility Study and
National Environmental Policy Act**

SUMMARY

The Portland District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), with its non-federal sponsor the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD), is resuming a feasibility study to examine potential reallocation of storage space in the Corps' reservoirs on tributaries to the Willamette River and managed as the Willamette Valley Project (see below map). As the Corps resumes this feasibility study, we seek to inform you about the study and invite your input on the scope of issues to consider to meet the goals of the study.

Currently, the space in which water is stored in these reservoirs is allocated for joint uses: flood risk management, irrigation, navigation, hydropower production, water quality, recreation, supporting fish and wildlife, and municipal and industrial water supply.

This feasibility study will evaluate the potential for reallocation of storage space from these reservoirs to respond to current and future water supply needs in the Willamette River basin. Although municipal and industrial (M&I) water supply, irrigation, and supporting fish and wildlife are among the uses of stored water, no specific allocation of reservoir space was made for these uses when the dams were first authorized by Congress.

The Corps and OWRD began to evaluate the availability of M&I water supply and irrigation storage in the reservoirs in June 1996. The study began investigating future water demands in the basin, particularly during the summer conservation storage and flow release season. The feasibility study was delayed pending the completion of consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act for the Corps' reservoir operations. OWRD has requested that the multi-purpose water supply evaluation continue, and as a result, the Corps is resuming the study.

The Corps will also initiate preparation of an environmental assessment (EA) pursuant to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as implemented by the Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 C.F.R. § 1500-1508) and the Corps' NEPA regulations (33 C.F.R. § 230). The NEPA process will help the Corps determine what issues and

needs to consider during the study and if reallocating reservoir storage space for water supply, irrigation, and fish and wildlife uses is likely to cause significant environmental effects that could warrant preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) instead of an EA. The Corps will prepare the NEPA document in combination with the feasibility study to reduce duplication of effort and paperwork (40 C.F.R. § 1506.4). This combined report will be titled *Willamette River Basin Review Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment* and will be used for both Corps planning and NEPA purposes.

As part of the study and NEPA processes, the Corps will scope the proposed project by engaging state, local and federal agencies, Tribal governments and the public in the early identification of concerns, possible reallocation actions for consideration and potential effects. The Corps' formal scoping period runs from March 2, 2016 through April 16, 2016. Input, postmarked by April 16, 2016, may be submitted to wbr@usace.army.mil or by posted mail to Tim Kuhn, Project Manager, CENWP-PM-F, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Portland District, P.O. Box 2946, Portland, OR 97208-2946.

If the analysis within the environmental assessment shows that the proposed federal action will have no significant environmental effects, the EA would result in a Finding of No Significant Impact. If the Corps determines that preparation of an EIS is necessary, the agency will formally initiate this process with publication of a notice of intent for its preparation the Federal Register.

To facilitate public participation in the study and NEPA process, the Corps and OWRD will host public information scoping sessions in an open house format. The interested public are welcome to drop in at any time. Staff will be available throughout each session to discuss study goals and the decision-making process and receive input on the scope of issues to be considered in the study.

March 15
Salem
Pringle Community Hall
606 Church St. SE, Salem, 97301
3-5 p.m. and 6-8 p.m.

March 16
Eugene/Springfield
City Hall/Library Meeting Room
225 5th St, Springfield, 97477
3-5 p.m. and 6-8 p.m.

For information about the proposed feasibility study and NEPA process:

Web: www.nwp.usace.army.mil/About/Currentprojects/WillametteBasinReview.aspx

Email: wbr@usace.army.mil

Posted mail: Mr. Tim Kuhn, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Portland District, P.O. Box 2946, Portland, OR 97208-2946

Phone: (503) 808-4752

To add your name to, or remove your name from the project e-mail list, send contact information to the email address above.

